

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for downloading a file from a remote storage center to an end-user  
5 computer for content provided from a content server, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving a request from an end-user computer for content at a content server;  
transmitting from said content server to said end-user computer, in response to said  
end-user request, said content comprising at least one storage resource locator ("SRL"),  
wherein said SRL comprises a unique file identifier to identify a file associated with said  
content;

transmitting a request for said file from said end-user computer to a remote storage  
center, including transmitting said SRL for said file; and

transmitting, from said storage center to said end-user computer, said file identified by  
said SRL.

2. The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

transmitting from said content server to said end-user computer an SRL further  
comprising an authentication certificate;

determining, at said storage center, using said authentication certificate, whether said  
request is valid; and

transmitting, from said storage center to said end-user computer, said file only if said  
request is valid.

3. The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
transmitting to said end-user computer an SRL further comprising a time-out  
parameter; and  
5 determining whether said request is valid through said time-out parameter.

4. The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the step of embedding  
said SRL into said content after receiving said request from an end-user computer for said  
content.

5. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein:  
the step of transmitting content comprises the step of transmitting hyper-text mark-up  
language (“HTML”) content; and  
the step of embedding said SRL into said content comprises the step of embedding  
15 said SRL into said HTML.

6. The method as set forth in claim 4, wherein the step of embedding said SRL  
into said content comprises the steps of:  
storing at least one SRL for a file in an SRL file; and  
20 extracting said SRL from said SRL file.

7. The method as set forth in claim 4, wherein the step of embedding said SRL into said content comprises the steps of:

coupling a local device comprising a cache to said content server;  
storing at least one SRL for at least one file in said cache of said local device; and  
extracting said SRL from said cache of said local device.

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8. The method as set forth in claim 7, further comprising the step of: mounting said local device as a storage device for said content server for access to said SRLs.

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9. The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
storing at least one SRL for at least one file in an SRL file;  
storing said file for access by a file system; and  
organizing said SRL files in a file system, accessible to said content server, with a file structure substantially similar to said file structure for said files.

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10. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein:  
the step of transmitting a request for said file from said end-user computer to a remote storage center comprises the step of transmitting a hyper-text transfer protocol (“HTTP”) request; and  
20 the step of transmitting said file from said storage center to said end-user computer comprises the step of transmitting said files using HTTP.

11. The method as set forth in claim 10, wherein the step of transmitting, from said storage center to said end-user computer, said file comprises the step of transferring a large media object.

5 12. A system comprising:

content server for receiving a request from an end-user computer for content, and for transmitting to said end-user computer, in response to said end-user request, said content comprising at least one storage resource locator ("SRL"), wherein said SRL comprises a unique file identifier to identify a file associated with said content;

10 storage center for receiving a request for said file from said end-user computer, including transmitting said SRL for said file, and for transmitting, from to said end-user computer, said file identified by said SRL.

15 13. The system as set forth in claim 12, wherein:

said SRL further comprises an authentication certificate; and  
said storage center for determining whether said request is valid using said authentication certificate, and for and transmitting to said end-user computer said file only if said request is valid.

20 14. The system as set forth in claim 12, wherein:

said SRL further comprises a time-out parameter; and

10 said storage center for determining whether said request is valid through said time-out  
parameter.

15. The system as set forth in claim 12, wherein said content server further  
5 comprising processes for embedding said SRL into said content after receiving said request  
from an end-user computer for said content.

16. The system as set forth in claim 15, wherein:  
10 said content comprises mark-up language (“HTML”) content; and  
said content server further comprising processes for embedding said SRL into said  
HTML.

17. The system as set forth in claim 15, wherein:  
15 said SRL further comprising an SRL file; and  
said content server further comprising processes for extracting said SRL from said  
SRL file.

18. The system as set forth in claim 12, further comprising a local device, coupled  
to said content server, that includes a cache for storing at least one SRL for at least one file in  
20 said cache of said local device, wherein said content server further comprising processes for  
extracting said SRL from said cache of said local device.

19. The system as set forth in claim 18, wherein said content server comprises processes for mounting said local device as a storage device to said SRLs.

20. The system as set forth in claim 19, further comprising a file system, accessible 5 to said content server, including at least one SRL file for storing at least one SRL, wherein said file system comprising a file structure substantially similar to a file structure for said files.

21. A storage center comprising:  
storage for storing a plurality of files;  
storage control for receiving a request from an end-user computer, remote from said storage center, for at least one file, and for transmitting said file to said end-user computer, said request comprising at least one storage resource locator ("SRL") corresponding to said file, and wherein said SRL comprises a unique file identifier to identify said file associated with content that said end-user computer downloaded from a content server.

22. The storage center as set forth in claim 21, wherein:  
said SRL further comprises an authentication certificate; and  
said storage center for determining whether said request is valid using said authentication certificate, and for transmitting to said end-user computer said file only if said 20 request is valid.

23. The storage center as set forth in claim 21, wherein:

said SRL further comprises a time-out parameter; and  
said storage center for determining whether said request is valid through said time-out  
parameter.